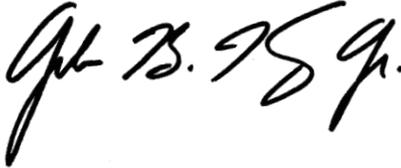




**TO:** P-12 Education Committee  
**FROM:** Ken Wagner   
**SUBJECT:** Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework  
**DATE:** April 21, 2014  
**AUTHORIZATION(S):** 

**Issue for Decision**

Should the Board of Regents approve the Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework?

**Proposed Handling**

The question will come before a meeting of the Regents P-12 Education Committee for action at its April 2014 meeting.

**Procedural History and Background Information**

In July 2010, the Board of Regents adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. Since that time, the Department has articulated the shifts in instructional practice that are required to implement these rigorous standards successfully. These shifts help ensure that students who graduate from high school have received instruction that develops the knowledge and skills required to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century college and careers.

At the May 2011 joint discussion of the Board's P-12 Education Committee and College and Career Readiness Working Group, Department staff was directed to create a Social Studies Content Advisory Panel, consisting of a wide range of experts from the field. One of the charges of this panel was to advise on the suggested revision of the *New York State Social Studies Resource Guide with Core Curriculum* to ensure alignment to *New York State Common Core Learning Standards*. Following the September 2012 Board of Regents Meeting, the Content Advisory Panel was asked to advise the Department on the possibility of splitting of Global History and Geography into two distinct units of study that could be required for graduation purposes.

The Content Advisory Panel has met since fall 2011 and advised the Department on three draft versions of the New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework. Although the Framework has been aligned to the *New York State Common Core Learning Standards*, it maintains the standards statements from the existing *New York State Learning Standards for Social Studies* (1996) and the order of courses and some of the key topics from the *Social Studies Resource Guide with Core Curriculum* (1998). The Framework includes Key Ideas, Conceptual Understandings, and Concept Specifications for each grade level.

The K-8 Draft Framework was posted for review and comment from September 2012 through early October 2012, and the 9-12 Draft Framework was posted for public review and comment from February 2013 through early March 2013. Following each of these first public reviews, the Content Advisory Panel met, considered all comments, and advised the Department on necessary changes. In each of these public review periods, comments ranged from requests for less content in order to provide opportunities for greater depth to requests for greater content specificity to provide better guidance for teachers. Department staff incorporated revisions suggested by the Content Advisory Panel in response to the first surveys. As this work entailed the balance between the incorporation of more specific content and opportunities for greater depth, the resulting Draft K-12 Framework document was substantially different from the first public drafts.

In September 2013, the National Council for the Social Studies released the final version of the *College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards*. This document provides guidance for enhancing the rigor of K-12 civics, economics, geography, and history education. It provides a suggested methodology – the “Inquiry Arc” – that is now incorporated in our New York Framework. The Inquiry Arc provides an approach to increased rigor through questions and planned inquiries that apply disciplinary concepts and tools, evaluate sources, and use evidence to communicate conclusions and take informed action.

The Content Advisory Panel convened in November 2013 to review these document revisions and make further recommendations. Following additional revisions suggested by the Panel and others, the revised Draft Framework was posted for a public comment period from December 17, 2013 through January 20, 2014.

The Content Advisory Panel met in late January 2014 to review the results of the most recent survey and other recommended changes to the Framework. After the Content Advisory Panel’s meeting, the Framework was revised to incorporate suggested changes and recommendations.

Representatives of the Content Advisory Panel discussed the revised draft Framework at the March 2014 meeting of the Board of Regents. After brief comments by four of the members, the panel responded to questions from members of the Board of Regents.

## **Additional Revisions**

The final draft Framework was posted on EngageNY.org after the March 2014 Board meeting. The Department received additional feedback and made adjustments accordingly.

In response to concerns about gender representation in grades 9 and 10, revisions were made to make explicit several women who had previously been referred to in the Framework, such as Theodora of the Byzantine Empire, Elizabeth I, Isabella of Spain, Catherine the Great, Empress Dowager Cixi, Mother Theresa, Aung San Sui Kyi, and Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. In addition, the Framework incorporates topics such as gender roles (9.2b), women's rights (10.2b), women's perspective on imperialism (10.4a), and contemporary issues of gender (10.8b). Although the underlying Social Standards remain unmodified by this Framework, the upcoming release of the Field Guide can be used by schools and district when finalizing local curriculum and instruction decisions.

Framework language was adjusted based on feedback from members of Native American nations. For example, references to sacred Native American religious ceremonies were removed, and language was made consistent with the existence of Native American national anthems. In general, language was refined and sharpened to remain consistent with Native American perspectives on New York State and United States history.

Framework language was adjusted in grades 7 and 11 with respect to the contributions of the Dutch of New Netherland. For example, grade 7 includes additional Dutch contributions, and grade 11 includes colonial practices of self-government, such as the right of petition in New Netherland.

## **Summary**

Appendix A includes examples of the widespread support for the New York Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework from social studies teachers, professional organizations, and other state and national educational organizations. A common theme is the call to emphasize the importance of instruction in the social studies at all grade levels, and regional councils for social studies have offered to partner with the Department to prepare students to be active, engaged world citizens. These professional organizations commend the collaborative work that created this document and call for additional collaboration as the Department develops future social studies assessments. In addition, organizations that promote human rights, Native American and African American education, as well as S.G. Grant, a nationally-recognized expert in social studies education, have stated their support for this document.

The Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework provides districts and teachers information needed to develop local curriculum in the social studies for grades

K-12. It incorporates the five learning standards for social studies: (1) History of the United States and New York, (2) World History, (3) Geography, (4) Economics, and (5) Civics, Citizenship and Government. The key ideas, conceptual understandings, and content specification provide guidance as to the “what” to teach; the Common Core skills and social studies practices identify discipline-related skills needed in the social studies. Further guidance in curriculum development will be provided by a field guide.

### **Next Steps: The Field Guide**

During the process of Framework development, the Content Advisory Panel considered the instructional resources that could be used by schools and districts when implementing this Framework in local communities. The Department will provide a Field Guide that incorporates these panel recommendations and other implementation strategies. The Field Guide will begin with an overview of the purpose of the social studies and will introduce the shifts in social studies instruction. The first section of the Guide will provide guidance and examples for leveraging key ideas, conceptual understandings, and case studies/examples to teach patterns and concepts. This section will address how to formulate the essential questions that drive inquiry in the classroom and align to the C3 Framework. The second section will address how to create performance tasks that integrate the key concepts articulated in the Framework with the Common Core skills and social studies practices to promote evidence-based argumentation. The third section will provide guidance in how to create meaningful lesson sequences to implement the integration of content and skills. It is anticipated that the field guide will be ready in summer/fall 2014.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: That the Board approve the recommendation as submitted, and direct Department staff to post the final approved Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework.

**Appendix A: Letters of Support**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Individual Submitted</b>
Council for Economic Education	Nan Morrison
Long Island Council for the Social Studies	Brian Dowd Gloria Sesso
Westchester Lower Hudson Council for the Social Studies	Susan Chester
Mid-Hudson Council for the Social Studies	Nancy Maguire
Holocaust and Human Rights Center	Millie Jasper
Native American Resource Center	Perry Ground
Project Brownstone	Earl Davis
Robert H. Jackson Center	James C. Johnson
Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign	Andy Mager
Binghamton University Graduate School of Education	S. G. Grant, Dean
Shenendehowa Social Studies Supervisor	Lisa Kissinger
New York Geographic Alliance	Timothy McDonnell
Syracuse CSD, Supervisor of Social Studies	Nick Stamoulacatos
Curriculum and Assessment Task Force, NYS Council for the Social Studies and NYS Social Studies Supervisors Association	Timothy Potts Michael Collazo Kathy DeForge
New York State Social Studies Supervisors Association	Kathy DeForge
Association of Teachers of Social Studies/UFT	Ollie Fields Thacker
Capital District Council for the Social Studies	Stacey L. Muscato
Central New York Council for the Social Studies	Katherine Gross
Western Southern Tier Council for the Social Studies	Rick Bates
Rochester Area Council for the Social Studies	Robbin DeHollander
NYSUT	Catalina Fortino



COUNCIL FOR  
**Economic  
Education**

*Teaching Opportunity*<sup>®</sup>

April 7, 2014

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor  
New York State Board of Regents  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

On behalf of the Council for Economic Education (CEE) I would like to voice our support for the revised New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework currently under consideration. This framework significantly improves on the state's current framework in regard to economics education.

CEE is the leading organization in the United States that focuses on the economic and financial education of students from kindergarten through high school. For 65 years, our mission has been to instill in young people the fourth "R"—a real-world understanding of economics and personal finance. It is only by acquiring economic and financial literacy that children can learn that there are better options for a life well lived, will be able to see opportunity on their horizon line and, ultimately, can grow into successful and productive adults capable of making informed and responsible decisions.

Having read a draft of the revised framework, we believe that it is a step in the right direction for New York State K-12 students. In particular the revised framework provides K-8 students with a solid grounding in the economic way of thinking. CEE strongly believes that economic and financial education should begin with the youngest learners and we are pleased that the revised framework does this.

At the high school level the New York State framework has begun to incorporate the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards. The C3 Framework clearly lays out economics' integral role in social studies education and so we support New York State's effort to draw from this important national document. As the New York State Framework continues to evolve and grow, we look forward to seeing even greater integration of economics into the history, government and other courses that make up the high school social studies curriculum.

As Dr. Alan Krueger, Bendheim Professor of Economics and Public Affairs at Princeton University, recently wrote on a blog post on our website, "Economics provides the best framework for thinking about the policies that could help improve the quality of people's lives and solve society's problems. Studying economics provides a new lens with which to view the world." We couldn't agree more, and we at CEE will continue to advocate strongly for sound economic and financial education for all young people.

122 East 42nd St., Suite 2600  
New York, New York 10168  
212.730.7007  
212.730.1793 fax

Please know that we stand at the ready to support your efforts in the revised New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework. We look forward to working with you to ensure that every K-12 student in New York State has the opportunity to integrate an economic way of thinking into their daily lives.

Yours truly,



Nan J. Morrison  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Council for Economic Education

cc: Commissioner John King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Lester Young



# THE LONG ISLAND COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES

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[www.licss.org](http://www.licss.org)

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April 2014

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

As representatives of the LICSS, an organization of over 1000 social studies teachers and administrators on Long Island, we are pleased that social studies has returned to the forefront of the Regents agenda. We support the Social Studies Framework as a first step in the revitalization of social studies in our schools, K-12.

LICSS was actively involved with meetings and communication to encourage social studies teachers to comment on the Framework when it was distributed for comment. Teachers supported the emphasis on civic education and history, particularly in grades 11 and 12. Our country's founding values are a significant part of grade 11.

The vision of Social Studies developed in the framework, which builds on common core learning, needs to be supported from the Board of Regents to the classroom teacher at every grade level, K-12. The Framework should be accompanied by renewed assessments built on the common core skills reflected in the framework and a new emphasis on the inclusion of social studies in every child's education. Additionally, throughout the state our best teachers must develop the professional resources needed for use by all our educators. This process will insure successful implementation and knowledgeable citizens of the United States and the global community.

Thomas Jefferson said that a republic depends upon its citizens knowing its history. This is more true today than ever before. The Board of Regents has the sacred duty of carrying out Jefferson's charge to us by returning social studies to its rightful and co-equal place with other disciplines.

Sincerely,

Brian Dowd  
Co-President

Gloria Sesso  
Co-President

cc: Commissioner  
Members of the Board of Regents

# Westchester Lower Hudson Council for the Social Studies

Affiliated with the New York State Council for the Social Studies and  
the National Council for the Social Studies

April 5, 2014

Dr. Meryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

As an organization representing Social Studies teachers throughout Westchester County and the Lower Hudson Valley, our board has carefully reviewed the proposed K-12 Social Studies Framework. Our purpose in writing this letter is to offer our enthusiastic support for the Framework, which we hope will soon be approved by the Board of Regents at the April meeting. We are pleased with how well the Framework aligns with the C3 Framework from NCSS and are excited about the inclusion of the Social Studies practices and the emphasis on a vertical articulation of skills K-12. All are important tools for teachers and districts when developing Social Studies curricula and implementing the Framework.

We are hopeful that approval of the Framework by the Board of Regents will lead to:

- A change in the Commissioner's Regulations to mandate the teaching of two years of Global History and the creation of a single year Global History Regents examination at the conclusion of the second year course.
- A short time-table of implementation of the new Frameworks.
- The next generation of Social Studies assessments, aligned with Social Studies skills and practices.
- Recognition of elementary Social Studies as an integral and non-negotiable part of the K-12 curriculum, serving as the foundation of knowledge and skills needed at the secondary level and beyond.
- A continued partnership between the State Education Department and Social Studies teachers as the Framework is implemented and assessments designed.

Sincerely,



Susan Chester  
Vice President

cc: Commissioner John B. King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell

Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Lester Young

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SW BOCES

### **Michael St. John**

Clarkstown Schools

### **Maria Thompson**

Pelham Schools

### **Ed Waite**

Port Chester HS

Dear Chancellor Tisch,

On behalf of the members of the Mid Hudson Social Studies Council I would like to express our organization's support for the most recent draft of the New York State Social Studies Framework. The members of our Executive Council have discussed the Framework throughout the revision period and believe that the final draft represents a significant improvement since its first inception. Members of the Executive Board appreciate the fact that many recommendations were incorporated into the final version. We urge the Board of Regents to vote for the latest draft.

Having said that, members of the Executive Board have expressed serious concerns regarding the implementation of the Framework. Members have consistently reported that social studies programs at the elementary level are being marginalized and time lost is being used to provide additional ELA and Math time. The current curriculum is being neglected and social studies has been reduced to learning about monthly themes or specific holidays. While we realize this is in no way the intent of the Commissioner or the Board of Regents, we also realize that silence regarding these practices has implied acceptance of the practices. We are respectfully asking the Commissioner and the Board to address this matter with local districts throughout the state.

Furthermore, the Executive Board and our members at large have expressed anxiety and concern over future assessments. We would like to state for the record that the absence of any state social studies assessment prior to high stakes testing for Global 10 and US History sends a message to all that social studies is somehow less important than other subjects prior to high school graduation. We urge you to reconsider this practice despite the current public outcry against testing and the financial burden additional testing places on the State Education Department. We support the testing of student understandings of the Key Ideas and Conceptual Understandings as well as the Social Studies Practices included in the K-12 Framework.

Members have expressed concern over the format of both the new Global 10 and US History Regents. The Mid Hudson Social Studies Council is working with regional BOCES to provide professional development that will assist teachers in making professional shifts from content to concept focus. However, individual districts have been reticent to invest in teacher training for social studies and far too few teachers are receiving the proper training. We believe that with adequate training, teachers will embrace the pedagogical shift toward historical thinking practices embedded in the Framework design. It is essential that the Commissioner and the Board of Regents communicate the need for quality professional development.

Finally, the Executive Board of the Mid Hudson Social Studies Council supports this Framework because it is an excellent starting point for rebuilding the integrity of the New York State Social Studies program. It reflects sound academic content and practices and was designed collaboratively among field professionals. We commend the process by which the Framework was created. However, we want to make it clear that the Framework in and of itself will not prepare our students to be 21<sup>st</sup> century learners or global citizens. We believe that transformation occurs through high quality social studies instruction. Our organization looks forward to supporting the efforts of Commissioner King, the Board of Regents, the State Education Department, and the New York State Council for Social Studies to facilitate this transformation and embrace this exciting period of change.

Sincerely,

Nancy Maguire, President  
Mid Hudson Social Studies Council



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Dr. Merryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

The mission of the Holocaust and Human Rights Education Center is to enhance the teaching and learning of the lessons of the Holocaust and the right of all people to be treated with dignity and respect. We encourage students to speak up and act against all forms of bigotry and prejudice. Our work with teachers and students helps schools in the Lower Hudson fulfill the 1994 New York State mandate that the Holocaust and other human rights abuses be included in their curriculum. For the past twenty years, HHREC has developed education and training programs that would enable teachers to treat this complex subject sensitively and confidently.

Our co-directors of education have reviewed very carefully the proposed new Social Studies Common Core Framework, and we wish to commend those who developed this revised k-12 document and express our support for the Framework. We believe that it addresses the essential provisions of the state mandate regarding the teaching of the Holocaust and other human rights violations on the elementary, middle and high school levels. These topics include basic civil rights and respect for the law, the history of different immigrant groups (voluntary and forced), slavery, the treatment of native Americans, the Irish famine, different genocides of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and the Holocaust.

We look forward to final approval of the Frameworks by the Board of Regents and its implementation throughout the state. It will clearly underscore our important mission, and we stand ready to use the resources and infrastructure of our organization to move this important work forward.

Sincerely,

Millie Jasper  
Executive Director

cc: Commissioner John B. King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson

Regent Jossephine Finn  
Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent Lester Young

April 3, 2014



# Native American Resource Center

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Dr. Merryl H. Tisch, Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

On behalf of the Native American Resource Center (part of the Rochester City School District), I have reviewed the draft of the New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework and ask that the Board of Regents adopts the Framework. This document has incorporated elements of Native American history and culture at several grade levels that will help students of New York State better understand Native Peoples. This Framework also encourages the study of Native Peoples throughout American history, not only before or at the time of encounter with Europeans; this broad study will help students better understand contemporary Native Peoples of New York and our continued role in this country's shared history.



The Tree of Peace  
Copyright © 1991 by John Kachonas Faxon

The Native American Resource Center looks forward to the adoption and future implementation of this Framework and the continued study of the cultural heritage of Native Americans. As an Educator of Native American heritage, I believe this Framework will lay a foundation for culturally sensitive and respectful teaching about Native Peoples.

Respectfully,

Perry Ground (Onondaga, Turtle clan)  
Project Director

c: Commissioner John King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent Wade Norwood

Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Lester Young



Dr. Merryl H. Tisch, Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

As the Director of Project Brownstone, I had an opportunity to review the New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework and to offer ideas for the incorporation into the document that would provide the integration of the African-American story into classrooms.

I am pleased to see that many of my suggestions have been included and would ask that the Board of Regents adopts the Framework. This document provides support for the incorporation of the African-American experience into the courses taught in New York State.

Sincerely,

Earl Davis, Founder and Chair of the Board of Directors

c: Commissioner John King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
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Regent Lester Young



Dr. Merryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor

Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

The Robert H. Jackson Center in Jamestown, New York was established to honor and advance Justice Jackson's remarkable legacy, pursue the relevance of his life's work and to provide an educational facility for those purposes. The Center's programs place special emphasis on educating youth on issues of justice and fairness and applying Jackson's work in international humanitarian law as it relates to bringing to trial those responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and other serious violations of international law.

The Jackson Center has been carefully monitoring the development of the New York State Social Studies Framework. After reviewing the final draft, we would like to state clearly that we fully support the new framework and feel it will enhance student learning in the social studies. We commend the New York State Education Department and Board of Regents for their leadership in crafting this document. As you move forward with the implementation of the framework the Jackson Center is more than willing to assist in dissemination and training.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James C. Johnson".

James C. Johnson  
President and Chief Executive Officer

cc: Commissioner John B. King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Andrew Brown

305 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Jamestown, New York 14701  
[www.roberthjackson.org](http://www.roberthjackson.org)



Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
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Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
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1613



2013

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April 7, 2014

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch, Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

I write on behalf of the Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign, an educational and advocacy project to mark the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first treaty between Europeans and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

We reviewed the initial public draft of the New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework and offered input to the Department of Education about revisions to that draft. We have worked with their staff on updates to the K-8 portion of the framework. We have found their staff to be diligent in hearing concerns and working with us. They have made important strides toward incorporating the study of indigenous peoples and their continued struggles for rights and recognition. We support this work. There are still areas of the framework that we would like to see revised, and we welcome the opportunity for continued dialogue to improve the language and content of the framework.

Our organization will be happy to partner with the New York State Education Department as well as local school districts to help identify resources to utilize with the implementation of this framework.

Sincerely,

*Andy Mager*

Andy Mager  
Project Coordinator

cc: Commissioner John King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown

Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Lester Young

April 2, 2014

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

I am writing with two purposes in mind. One is to urge the adoption of the draft New York State Social Studies Framework; the second is to urge the development of correspondingly ambitious student assessments.

Social studies and its constituent disciplinary fields (e.g., civics, economics, geography, and history) have faced a rocky road of late. Effectively ignored by the No Child Left Behind legislation, social studies then seemed coopted as a minor part of the Common Core English-Language Arts standards. There are many reasons for the apparent marginalization of social studies—some legitimate, others not—but the outcome was the same: Social studies appeared to be withering on the vine.

It is withering no more. Through individual and collaborative efforts, social studies is rebounding in states across the country. At the national level, representatives from 23 states and 15 professional organizations met over three years to produce a forward-looking document—*The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for State Social Studies Standards*—that promotes an ambitious approach to teaching and learning social studies through student-centered inquiry including key elements of the Common Core ELA standards. The *C3 Framework*, then, is intended to help state and local curriculum developers address the perception that social studies is merely a parade of facts. The committee that drafted the New York State Social Studies Framework did so with the *C3 Framework* in mind and their efforts are being widely embraced by thoughtful social studies educators across the state; I urge the Board of Regents to adopt this document to move social studies forward.

Neither the *C3 Framework* nor the new New York Social Studies Framework, however, will transform social studies teaching and learning by themselves. Teaching and learning are complex activities and so, while new curriculum can help teachers engage their students, equally important are the assessments that follow. Few observers would argue that assessment should drive teaching and

learning. But if assessments are not coherent with the curricular directions expressed, then the chance for real and robust reform diminishes.

Students might demonstrate their ability to make and support arguments, a central focus of the Common Core ELA standards, in any number of forms and venues. For example, imagine if the US History Regents exam consisted solely of two argument-based tasks—one on an historical issue of national importance and a second on a current state-level concern. For the first, students would be expected to take a position on a problem, issue, or concern in the past. For example, they might be asked to defend a stance on whether the American Revolution was revolutionary or whether Abraham Lincoln’s efforts really freed the slaves. Students could draw on a selection of relevant documents as with the current Document-Based Question, but rather than being asked to simply describe or explain a social phenomena, they would be expected to develop and defend a position on that issue. On the second task, students would be expected to draw on the historical antecedents of the state concern (e.g., casino gambling) as well as on the political, economic, and geographic elements they have learned through their social studies coursework. Again, they could use a selection of documents related to the issue, but would be expected to craft a defensible argument rather than simply restate what is in the documents.

Obviously there is much more to consider when moving away from the exclusive use of traditional forms of assessment. My hope, however, is that the issue of assessment will be as fully and carefully considered as the curricular issues represented in the Social Studies Framework that are being considered by the group today. Please know that I would be happy to help however I can to move this project and the teaching and learning of Social Studies in New York forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. G. Grant', with a long, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

S. G. Grant  
Professor and Dean

cc: Commissioner John B. King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn

Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Lester Young



# Shenendehowa

## Central Schools

April 7, 2014

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor, New York Board of Regents  
New York State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

In my role as the secondary Social Studies Administrator for Shenendehowa Central Schools, I have closely watched the evolution of the New York Curriculum Frameworks. As the Vice-President of the New York State Social Studies Supervisory Association (NYS4A), and a member of the New York State Council for the Social Studies/NYS4A Curriculum Task Force, I have participated in a close review of the Frameworks to provide feedback to NYSED's Content Advisory Panel. This letter will provide my endorsement for the Framework as part of New York's commitment to exemplary Social Studies education for our students.

There is much to endorse in New York's new Social Studies Curriculum Framework. The inclusion of key ideas and conceptual understandings will provide essential guidance to local school districts as they refine curriculum. The clarity of the grade-by-grade vertical articulation of skills provides a sharper focus for the integration of literacy and the Common Core Learning Standards. I am reassured by the reference to the National Council for the Social Studies' College, Career and Civic Life Framework (C3). I believe the C3 Inquiry Arc will lead the field into an inquiry-based approach that will result in higher levels of student achievement in Social Studies – and more importantly – lead our students to the application of knowledge and ideas which will result in active and engaged citizens for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

While I do support the New York Social Studies Curriculum Framework and the guidance it provides local school districts to develop curriculum, instruction and assessment, I strongly encourage the Board of Regents to publicly endorse:

- The next generation of Social Studies Regents examinations aligned to best practices and principles of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning, teaching and assessment
- The recognition of elementary social studies as an integral and non-negotiable part of the K-12 continuum. Elementary Social Studies is essential as the foundation of knowledge and skills needed for success at the secondary level and beyond.
- The development of a grade-by-grade vertical articulation of skills for grades 9-12.
- The development of a new Global History & Geography Regents exam which focuses exclusively on the concepts, content and skills assigned to Grade 10 in the

■ Shenendehowa District Office  
(518) 881-0600  
5 Chelsea Place  
Clifton Park, NY 12065  
[www.sbenet.org](http://www.sbenet.org)

Shenendehowa High School  
(Grades 9-12)  
970 Rte. 146  
Clifton Park, NY 12065

EAST BUILDING  
(Grades 10-12)  
(518) 881-0310

WEST BUILDING  
(Grades 9)  
(518) 881-0330

Shenendehowa Middle Schools  
(Grades 6-8)  
970 Rte. 146  
Clifton Park, NY 12065  
ACADIA (518) 881-0450  
GOWANA (518) 881-0460  
KODA (518) 881-0470

Shenendehowa Elementary Schools  
(Grades K-5)  
ARONGEN (518) 881-0510  
489 Clifton Park Center Rd.  
Clifton Park, NY 12065

CHANGO (518) 881-0520  
100 Chango Drive  
Ballston Lake, NY 12019

KARIGON (518) 881-0530  
970 Rte. 146  
Clifton Park, NY 12065

ORTE (518) 881-0540  
1581 Crescent Rd.  
Clifton Park, NY 12065

ORENDA (518) 881-0550  
970 Rte. 146  
Clifton Park, NY 12065

SHATERON (518) 881-0580  
35 Maxwell Drive  
Clifton Park, NY 12065

SKANO (518) 881-0560  
970 Rte. 146  
Clifton Park, NY 12065

TESAGO (518) 881-0570  
970 Rte. 146  
Clifton Park, NY 12065

new Framework with appropriate field-testing of alternative, performance-based items.

- Collaboration with the field and professional organizations that support the field of Social Studies (i.e., the New York State Council for the Social Studies/New York State Social Studies Supervisory Association, the New York Geographic Alliance, the Council on Economic Education, the New York Historical Association, etc.) to provide models of high-quality unit and lesson plans through the publication of a Resource Guide.

NYSED provided the opportunity for Social Studies teachers from around the state to provide feedback to the Education Department. My colleagues here at Shenendehowa have had the opportunity to reflect and comment on the Framework, and revisions have been made to the Frameworks based on their feedback. I commend the Board of Regents, the Social Studies Content Advisory Panel, and NYSED for soliciting and responding to this feedback.

I look forward to your continued support of excellence in the field of Social Studies in New York.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Kissinger", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa Kissinger  
Academic Administrator, Social Studies 6 – 12

cc:

Commissioner John B. King  
Regents James C. Dawson



THE NEW YORK GEOGRAPHIC ALLIANCE  
Supporting Geography in New York Since 1988!

Chemistry/Geosciences Department  
Monroe Community College  
1000 East Henrietta Road  
Rochester, New York 14623

April 3, 2014

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch, Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

The New York Geographic Alliance has reviewed the New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework and would ask that the Board of Regents adopt the Framework. This document provides support for the continuation of the teaching of geography at all grade levels, particularly through the integration of the social studies practices including those of geography.

The New York Geographic Alliance looks forward to the implementation of this framework and the continued importance of geographic education in the school of New York State.

Sincerely,

*Timothy McDonnell*

Timothy McDonnell, Coordinator

c: Commissioner John King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Lester Young

PHONE: (585) 292-2398 FAX (585) 292-3824 WEBSITE: <http://www.nygeographicalliance.org>  
EMAIL: [tmcdonnell@monroecc.edu](mailto:tmcdonnell@monroecc.edu) OR [carol.gersmehl@gmail.com](mailto:carol.gersmehl@gmail.com)



# SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Department of Teaching and Learning

725 Harrison Street · Syracuse, NY 13210

Office 315·435·6358 · Direct 315·435·4052 Fax 315·435·4229

Sharon L. Contreras

Superintendent of Schools

April 10, 2014

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch, Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

On behalf of the Syracuse City School District and my students, I have reviewed the New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework. This document is of importance to our city as it will serve as the vehicle for enhancing social studies education to prepare our students for college, career and civic participation. Our social studies educators fully endorse and support the adoption of the inquiry arc of the National Council for Social Studies within our New York state Common Core K-12 Framework. I would urge the Board of Regents to adopt this framework and to support the importance of social studies education in our schools.

Though I know the Board of Regents new policies have not yet been adopted at this time for social studies, I strongly feel that twelve years of social studies at all levels be mandated into state regulations, with a one year assessment in Global History and Geography and a one year assessment in U.S. History and Government. I strongly encourage the State Education Department to also seriously consider an assessment in elementary social studies in order to prevent the serious marginalization of social studies that has taken place over the last decade. I look forward to continued support from the New York State Education Department on the implementation of this framework.

Sincerely,

Nick Stamoulacatos  
Supervisor of Social Studies

c: Commissioner John King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Lester Young



Monticello Central School System  
Robert J. Kaiser Middle School  
45 Breakey Avenue  
Monticello, New York 12701  
April 7, 2014

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

The New York State Council for the Social Studies (NYSCSS) and the New York State Social Studies Supervisors' Association (NYS4A) first convened a Curriculum and Assessment Task Force in the fall of 2012. Since that time, our Task Force has carefully reviewed all three drafts of the New York State Common Core K-12 Social Studies Framework that have been released. With great enthusiasm, we have observed the evolution of this work and applaud how the document has taken into consideration input from the field. Our purpose in writing this letter is to express vociferously our support for the Framework and to state our unqualified desire to partner with the New York State Education Department (NYSED) in the next steps of implementation.

NYSCSS and NYS4A have actively encouraged social studies educators from across the state to participate in the public feedback that NYSED has solicited. We see ourselves as partners in the work of the Department. As a Task Force, we have been especially excited about the inclusion of the "C3 Framework" as part of the introduction, which we believe will be an important tool in local curriculum design and implementation of the Framework. Furthermore, the emphasis on a vertical articulation of skills and the obvious stress on the *Social Studies Practices* are met with widespread approval. We are also pleased to see sharper clarity and focus on the inquiry-based approach in the *Key Ideas* and *Conceptual Understandings*. Including the *Content Specifications* was an outstanding addition to the entire document that clearly responded to the requests of the field from earlier drafts.

As the only statewide professional organizations for social studies education, NYSCSS & NYS4A have a strong tradition of partnering with NYSED on all aspects of standards, curriculum, and assessment development in the social studies. We hope this tradition will continue to thrive and expand. We want to partner with Department staff to bring this Framework to life and impact the teaching and learning of social studies statewide. NYSCSS & NYS4A stand ready to use our resources and infrastructure to move the work forward. We sincerely hope that we will be included in future discussions on the important next steps for

**NYSCSS:** Michael Collazo - President; Alfred Sive - President-Elect; Larry Paska - Vice President;  
Oliver Cashman-Brown - Treasurer; Tina Winkler - Secretary; Tim Potts - Past President

**NYS4A:** Kathy DeForge - President; Lisa Kissinger - Vice President;  
Marianne Dixon - Treasurer; Secretary - Cathleen Hayes



[www.nyscss.org](http://www.nyscss.org)



Framework implementation: assessment design, professional development, and general media communication about the Framework. In particular, our organizations stand ready and able to:

- Serve as thought leaders in developing new assessment items that measure the inquiry-based practices required by the Framework.
- Plan and provide statewide professional development institutes, workshops, and seminars on the Framework to teachers, administrators, and pre-service education programs.
- Develop a media campaign to promote the Framework and highlight examples of its shifts in classroom practice among our membership.

At the same time that we are supportive of the draft Framework, we are optimistic that the Framework's approval by the Board of Regents will lead to:

- The development of the "next generation of social studies assessments". A three-year development process for new Regents Examinations in Global History and Geography & in United States History and Government should be based on the Framework and include continued input from the field.
- Public awareness of elementary-level social studies as an integral and non-negotiable part of the K-12 program. In particular, Part 100 of the Commissioner's Regulations requires social studies instruction in grades K-12.
- NYSED support for elementary- and intermediate-level social studies as essential for the foundation of knowledge and skills needed for college and career readiness at the secondary level.
- The timely revision to Part 100 of the Commissioner's Regulations to reflect the new Framework. In particular, two (2) required units of credit in Global History and Geography (one in Grade 9 and one in Grade 10) should be delineated.

On behalf of the Task Force and our organizations, we thank you for your leadership in New York State education, and for the opportunity to partner with you in providing the best social studies education for our state's teaching and learning community.

Sincerely,

Timothy D. Potts (Immediate Past President)

Katherine A. DeForge (NYS4A President)  
Co-Chairpersons of the NYSCSS/NYS4A Curriculum & Assessment Task Force

**NYSCSS:** Michael Collazo - President; Alfred Sive - President-Elect; Larry Paska - Vice President;  
Oliver Cashman-Brown - Treasurer; Tina Winkler - Secretary; Tim Potts - Past President

**NYS4A:** Kathy DeForge - President; Lisa Kissinger - Vice President;  
Marianne Dixon - Treasurer; Secretary - Cathleen Hayes



[www.nyscss.org](http://www.nyscss.org)



*Michael J. Collazo*

Michael J. Collazo  
New York State Council for the Social Studies President

cc: Commissioner John B. King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Lester Young  
NYSCSS/NYS4A Task Force Members:  
Jennifer Allard  
Susan Chester  
Michael Collazo  
Brian Dowd  
Ollie Fields-Thacker  
Steve Goldberg  
Katherine Gross  
Joe Karb  
Lisa Kissinger  
Nancy Maguire  
Mirla Morrison  
Kim O'Neil  
Lawrence Paska  
Laura Retzlaff  
Joan Soldano  
Allison Weller  
Tina Winkler

**NYSCSS:** Michael Collazo - President; Alfred Sive - President-Elect; Larry Paska - Vice President;  
Oliver Cashman-Brown - Treasurer; Tina Winkler - Secretary; Tim Potts - Past President

**NYS4A:** Kathy DeForge - President; Lisa Kissinger - Vice President;  
Marianne Dixon - Treasurer; Secretary - Cathleen Hayes



[www.nyscss.org](http://www.nyscss.org)



**Marcellus Senior High School  
1 Mustang Hill  
Marcellus, New York 13108  
April 2, 2014**

**Dr. Meryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, New York 12234**

**Dear Chancellor Tisch:**

**The New York State Social Studies Supervisory Association was founded in 1973 and functions autonomously within the framework of the New York State Council for Social Studies. Its membership consists of more than one hundred Social Studies leaders in New York State who have responsibilities for social studies curriculum and instructional programs. We have maintained a very close working relationship with both NYSCSS and NYSED since our formation; working together to promote the status of social studies through the assurance of quality programs at every level, prekindergarten through grade twelve, and to improve social studies education in New York State.**

**One of the ways that we have attempted to achieve those goals recently is to co-sponsor a Curriculum and Assessment Task Force with the New York State Council for the Social Studies beginning in the fall of 2012. I Co-Chair this Task Force along with Timothy Potts, Past-President of NYSCSS. The Task has met several times and has carefully reviewed the three drafts of the K-12 Social Studies Frameworks that have been released by SED. We are encouraged by the fact that SED has elicited feedback from the field regarding the framework, not once but twice, and we fully support the revisions of the document that have**

**NYSCSS:** Michael Collazo - President; Alfred Sive - President-Elect; Lawrence Paska - Vice President;  
Oliver Cashman-Brown - Treasurer; Tina Winkler - Secretary; Tim Potts - Past President

**NYS4A:** Kathy DeForge - President; Lisa Kissinger - Vice President;  
Marianne Dixon - Treasurer; Cathleen Hayes - Secretary

taken place based on recommendations from the field. NYS4A's (New York State Social Studies Supervisory Association) purpose in writing to you today is to commend you for this process and to state our commitment to continue to play a major role in the further development and implementation in the subsequent steps necessary to roll out the K-12 curricula and assessments. We have actively partnered ourselves with SED on many initiatives in the past, including assisting them in soliciting feedback from the field on the frameworks and we sincerely want to continue that partnership. NYS4A, as well as the Task Force, is especially pleased to see that the National Council for the Social Studies' College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework has been included as part of the introduction of the Social Studies Frameworks, this we feel will be an integral tool in the implementation and curriculum design of the frameworks. The emphasis of Social Studies practices, focus on inquiry, concepts, and key ideas are also important aspects that have been added because of responses from the field to earlier drafts of the framework and this is greatly appreciated by the field.

We stand ready to assist SED in the development of assessments and the full implementation of the Framework as our collaborative efforts in the past, such as the *Social Studies Leaders' Guide*, have proven to be very beneficial to both SED and NYS4A.

While the New York State Social Studies Supervisory Association is supporting the draft of the K-12 Social Studies Framework, we trust that the approval by the Board of Regents will lead to:

- The next generation of Social Studies assessments aligned to best practices
- The unequivocal recognition that elementary social studies is an integral, legally-required and non-negotiable part of the K-12 continuum
- The investment in assisting the field to develop key resources and instructional support necessary to implement the frameworks responsibly.

Sincerely,

*Katherine A. DeForge*

**Katherine A. DeForge**  
**President**  
**New York State Social Studies**  
**Supervisory Association**

**NYS4A:** Michael Collazo - President; Alfred Sive - President-Elect; Lawrence Paska - Vice President;  
Oliver Cashman-Brown - Treasurer; Tina Winkler - Secretary; Tim Potts - Past President

**NYS4A:** Kathy DeForge - President; Lisa Kissinger - Vice President;  
Marianne Dixon - Treasurer; Cathleen Hayes - Secretary

**cc: Commissioner John B. King**  
**Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar**  
**Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett**  
**Regent Charles Bendit**  
**Regent Andrew Brown**  
**Regent Kathleen Cashin**  
**Regent Christine Cea**  
**Regent Geraldine Chapey**  
**Regent James Cottrell**  
**Regent James Dawson**  
**Regent Josephine Finn**  
**Regent Wade Norwood**  
**Regent Harry Phillips**  
**Regent Betty Rosa**  
**Regent James Tallon**  
**Regent Roger Tilles**  
**Regent Lester Young**

**NYSCSS:** Michael Collazo - President; Alfred Sive - President-Elect; Lawrence Paska - Vice President;  
Oliver Cashman-Brown - Treasurer; Tina Winkler - Secretary; Tim Potts - Past President

**NY4A:** Kathy DeForge - President; Lisa Kissinger - Vice President;  
Marianne Dixon - Treasurer; Cathleen Hayes - Secretary

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!

Association of Teachers of Social Studies/United Federation of Teachers  
50 Broadway 10<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, New York 10004  
March 31, 2014

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

The Association of Teachers of Social Studies/ United Federation of Teachers (ATSS/UFT) has carefully reviewed all three drafts of the K-12 Social Studies Framework that have been released. With great enthusiasm, we have observed the evolution of this work and applaud how the document has taken into consideration input from the field. Our purpose in writing this letter is to express vociferously our support for the Framework and to state our unqualified desire to partner with the State Education Department in the next steps of implementation.

We have actively encouraged Social Studies teachers across New York City to participate in the public feedback that the Department has solicited. As such, we see ourselves as partners in the work of the Department. As a local council and professional committee of the United Federation of Teachers, we have been especially excited about the inclusion of the C3 Framework as part of the introduction which we believe will be an important tool in the curriculum design and implementation of the frameworks. Furthermore, the emphasis on a vertical articulation of skills and the obvious stress on the Social Studies practices is met with widespread approval. We are also pleased to see sharper clarity and focus on the inquiry based approach in the key ideas and conceptual understandings. Including the content specifications was an outstanding addition to the entire document that clearly responded to the requests of the field from earlier drafts.

As a UFT Professional Committee, ATSS/UFT has a tradition of partnering with the New York State Council for Social Studies and the State Education Department in Social Studies that we hope will continue to thrive. We want to partner with Department staff to bring this Framework to life and impact the teaching and learning of Social Studies across the state. We sincerely hope that we will be included in the conversations as they turn to important issues such as assessment design and communication and full implementation of the Framework. As participants in the NYSCSS Task Force and as a local council, we stand ready to use the resources and infrastructure of our organization to move the work forward.

At the same time that the NYSCSS/NYS4A Task Force is supportive of the draft Framework, ATSS/UFT is optimistic that the approval by the Board of Regents will lead to:

- The next generation of Social Studies assessments aligned to best practices.

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!

- The recognition of elementary social studies as an integral and non-negotiable part of the K12 continuum.
- Elementary social studies is essential as the foundation of knowledge and skills needed for success at the secondary level and beyond.

Sincerely,

Ollie Fields Thacker  
President/Chairperson  
ATSS/UFT  
Association of Teachers of Social Studies

cc: Commissioner John B. King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent Lester Young

!      !



**Capital District Council for the Social Studies**  
**P.O. Box 14461 • Albany, NY 12212**

April 9, 2014

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

The Capital District Council for the Social Studies has reviewed all drafts of the K-12 Social Studies Framework that have been released. We appreciate the incorporation of social studies personnel in the creation of this framework. The purpose of this letter is to express our support for the Framework and to encourage a partnership with the State Education Department in the next steps of implementation.

As a council, we have encouraged our members across the Capital District to participate in the public feedback that the Department solicited. Our members have stated that they appreciate some of the specifications that were included. They also appreciate the focus given to Social Studies practices.

Although the Council is supportive of the Framework, we believe that this is just a stepping stone to the other levels of success, growth, consideration, and implementation that need to be done.

As a local council located in the Capital District, we are uniquely positioned as literal neighbors of the State Department to foster a working relationship as the Framework is transitioned to the classroom, and to assess the impact it will have on the teaching and learning of Social Studies. We look forward to working with you on the next steps of assessment design and communication and full implementation of the Framework.

Very truly yours,

Stacey L. Muscato  
President  
Capital District Council for the  
Social Studies

cc: Commissioner John B. King

Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent Lester Young



Dr. Merryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12234

April 7, 2014

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

On behalf of the Central New York Council for the Social Studies, I write to offer my insight and support for the proposed K-12 Social Studies Frameworks. Over the past two years, our members have actively engaged in discussions surrounding these Frameworks and the broader issue of the fate of social studies in the shift to Common Core. We have been gratified by a rich and robust analysis and are impressed by the commitment of the Board of Regents and SED to include voices from the field in the process. While not every individual hope or vision for NYS social studies may be met by the Frameworks, the opportunity to renew and reassert the centrality of social studies to a NY education has been well-received; our acceptance of this document is a reflection of our collective desire to move forward with its robust implementation.

On the whole, the proposed Social Studies Frameworks will work well for teachers and students across the state. They are not a dramatic shift from current practice. Teachers and students will still find rich content, an emphasis on reading primary sources and persuasive writing, as well as the development of many critical thinking skills that we know serve students well across disciplines, not just in social studies. The addition of some of the C3 principles, including inquiry learning, is appealing to many. Most teachers have long felt overwhelmed by the amount of content that is potentially on state exams, and therefore find themselves often “teaching to the test,” instead of providing deep learning for students. The Frameworks address this. Most importantly, the Frameworks provide an opportunity to reexamine how we make social studies meaningful to our students, and to potentially synergize and strategize around social studies for broader educational purposes. Many of us are eager to work in an interdisciplinary fashion to embed the Frameworks in other curricular areas, so that social studies *is* taught consistently in every child’s classroom K-12. There is no doubt that the Frameworks will provide some much-needed momentum to both expand and improve; the questions that linger are about “next steps” and the urgency with which the field should begin this very challenging and exciting work.

I would be remiss as a spokesperson for many teachers in my region if I did not express some of the most common concerns asserted about the Frameworks. By and large, teachers want to understand how this curriculum will be assessed – both in scope and form. Teachers,

especially in grades K-8, are very worried that there is increasing pressure to “shelf” social studies or simply use it as a backdrop in ELA instruction, since social studies is not considered a “core” subject. How will this impact the vertical articulation in the new Framework? In addition, a great deal of confusion remains over Global 9 & 10. So much of the content in Global 10 is dependent on knowledge acquired in Global 9, and yet the testing scheme is ill-defined. Further, there is enthusiasm for an inquiry-based curriculum, but the assessments will need to honor this pedagogical shift, and the state will need to provide great material support for the field to develop in this direction, especially in districts that have had to, more recently, build programs around improving passing rates on the current exams. As welcomed as a shift away from lists of content toward concepts is for most, teachers of students with a wide variety of learning challenges may need better-defined guidance than the current document offers.

Based on experiences thus far, I trust that many of these concerns will be heard and addressed in the days ahead. Our organization is ready to assist in all aspects of bringing the curriculum to life responsibly across the state. Great potential exists for the field to develop assessments that apply meaning and priority to these Frameworks, but the Board of Regents would be well-advised to settle some of the regulatory questions soon so that the work can begin in earnest. My organization looks forward to partnering with SED to communicate new expectations to the field, and to assist in the process of re-orienting and revitalizing social studies teachers across the state through professional development workshops and by working on field guides and toolkits that will help teachers to manage the shifts smoothly. This is an exciting moment to re-develop new materials, new kinds of assignments and new relationships between disciplines. Further, the Frameworks make it clear that no child in NY State can exit from public school without a deep awareness of the entire world or their vital role in our local communities. We are eager to work inclusively with community partners beyond the school walls to make certain that experience and civic interaction are at the heart of social studies learning in NY. The Frameworks remind us that New York State is a place where history, economy, geography, citizenship and humanity come alive and we look forward to celebrating that in the work still to be done.

As ever, social studies teachers across Central New York are committed to providing students with a world class education. We are ready to move forward and relish the opportunity provided by these frameworks.

Sincerely,



Katherine M. Gross, President of Central New York Council for the Social Studies

cc: Commissioner John B. King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin

Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Lester Young

Bath Central School  
25 Ellas Ave.  
Bath, NY 14810  
April 3, 2014

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Chancellor Tisch:

The Western Southern Tier Council for the Social Studies is proud to offer our support, and our highest recommendation, for the passing of the NYS created document commonly referred to as the K-12 Social Studies Framework. We have been watching the development of this work carefully, and applaud how the document has taken into consideration input from the field. We write to you to offer not only our support for the document, but also our desire to partner with the State Education Department in the next steps of implementation.

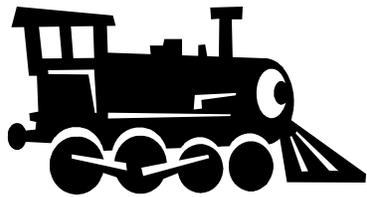
We are excited to see the creation of a meaningful social studies curriculum, at all levels of instruction in our schools. We believe that there is room in a modern implementation of social studies for the skill sets that are often associated with the C3 design for social studies classrooms. We are also excited to consider alternative designs to assessments to measure student success in future social studies classrooms across the state. We hope, as a working partner with SED, to have multiple opportunities to take part in the process for design and implementation of these exciting changes.

We would also like to take this moment to encourage you to give strong consideration to support the *meaningful* teaching of the social studies at the Elementary level. Allowing our youngest students to learn the fundamental concepts of a democratic society is the only way to produce the citizens that New York State needs to help us to understand our future in a global society.

Sincerely,

Rick Bates  
Western Southern Tier Council for the Social Studies

cc: Commissioner John B. King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
Regent James Cottrell  
Regent James Dawson  
Regent Josephine Finn  
Regent Wade Norwood  
Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent Lester Young



# Rochester Area Council for the Social Studies

April 6, 2014

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch  
Chancellor  
Regents Office  
State Education Building  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12234

## **2013-2014**

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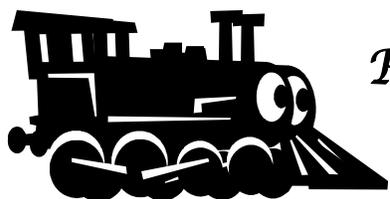
Dear Chancellor Tisch:

The Rochester Area Council for the Social Studies has been in existence for more than four decades. In recent years, we have sadly noted the increasing tendency to marginalize Social Studies education, at both the elementary and middle school level. The latest New York State Common Core Social Studies Framework has revived our hopes that New York State students will become active citizens, confident in their abilities to understand and act upon today's issues, not only in our own nation, but around the world. This confidence can only be derived from a comprehensive education in the political, economic, and social history of our world.

In January, we encouraged our members to exercise their ability to be a part of this important work (the Framework) by providing feedback concerning the draft of the framework. We are happy to see that some changes were made in response to that feedback. The document provides a clear guideline for teachers who have been struggling and/or resistant to incorporating Common Core Standards into Social Studies education. The Framework very skillfully combines current New York State Learning Standards for Social Studies, Common Core Literacy Standards, and the Unifying Themes and Inquiry Arc promoted by the National Council for the Social Studies. We are especially delighted to see the vertical progression charts, as they give emphasis to the fact that high school students must have a strong foundation, which can only come from Social Studies education in the lower grades.

My purpose in writing this letter is to express our support for the New York State Common Core Social Studies Framework. We believe that the approval of this document by the Board of Regents will lead to:

- recognition by school districts of the importance of elementary and middle school Social Studies education.
- a more efficient integration between ELA Common Core Standards and Social Studies education.
- a consistent set of expectations, while still allowing teachers the freedom to determine how best to teach concepts and key ideas to students with varying degrees of ability and backgrounds.



# *Rochester Area Council for the Social Studies*

**2013-2014**

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Steven Schockow, W. Irondequoit  
Chuck Staszewski, RCSD  
Annette Wattie, Hilton  
Carol Yost, Memorial Art Gallery

It is our fervent hope that the Board of Regents will provide that approval so that Social Studies education in New York State can improve upon their ability to help our students become the responsible citizens of our future.

Sincerely,

Robbin DeHollander

President

Rochester Area Council for the Social Studies

cc: Commissioner John B. King  
Vice Chancellor Anthony Bottar  
Chancellor Emeritus Robert Bennett  
Regent Charles Bendit  
Regent Andrew Brown  
Regent Kathleen Cashin  
Regent Christine Cea  
Regent Geraldine Chapey  
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Regent Harry Phillips  
Regent Betty Rosa  
Regent James Tallon  
Regent Roger Tilles  
Regent Lester Young

April 21, 2014

Mr. Ken Wagner  
Associate Commissioner  
Curriculum, Assessment, and Educational Technology  
New York State Education Department  
875 Education Building Annex  
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Mr. Wagner:

I write to express NYSUT's support for the New York State (NYS) Learning Standards for Social Studies and the proposed K-12 Social Studies Framework. The proposed Framework will enable school districts to create curriculum which will provide students with the tools necessary for effective decision-making, problem-solving, understanding the democratic process, and researching, evaluating, and interpreting information from a variety of sources. The Learning Standards and proposed Framework will help prepare all students to become active contributors in a society that is diverse and globally interdependent.

The Framework provides information on the vertical articulation of the content and the growth of complexity of materials from one grade band to another. The Framework also reflects developmental appropriateness for each grade level and presents a good spiraling of complexity of knowledge from one grade to another. Each grade level provides sufficient and reasonable content information that will enable districts and educators to expand on themes and conceptual understandings to create local curriculum in which students can pursue deeper understandings in social studies. The Framework leaves open the opportunity to include regional and local history into a district's curriculum leading to students' greater understanding of the role their area played in national, state, and/or local history.

While NYSUT supports the Framework, there are several recommendations that I would like to bring to your attention. We strongly recommend that:

- Any resources and guidance documents that will support the Framework should not contain scripted lessons.
- The guidance materials should be created by New York State social studies teachers, along with teachers of students with disabilities, English language learners, and gifted and talented students in order to provide materials with differentiated instructional strategies to address the diverse learning needs of the students.
- The Department provide clear guidance on the use of social studies content in the English Language Arts (ELA) modules at the high school level. We have heard from members that some districts are using the K – 8 ELA modules with social studies content as their social studies curriculum. The modules are not aligned with the NYS Learning Standards for Social Studies and were not written with that intent. For districts to abrogate the instruction of social

studies to the ELA modules is not sound education practice and denies students the proper instruction in the social studies standards. To have the same practice carried into the high school level would certainly compromise the integrity of the social studies standards and the Regents examinations in social studies.

In January 2014 NYSUT sent a letter to Commissioner King expressing the comments of NYSUT's Social Studies Committee on the Framework. We are pleased that many of these comments have been addressed. However, we still have concerns that the specificity of people and events as enumerated in some of the grade levels was done to ease the development of the Regents examinations that will accompany grades 10 and 11 study as well as any other tests that could be developed for grades 6, 7, and 8. We recommend that these Regents exams and any future tests provide students with the opportunity to expand on their knowledge of social studies without restrictions. We are also concerned that the *Participation in Government* and *Economics of Free Enterprise in a Global Economy* would not require the same depth of student understanding as the current curriculum guides for those courses. The materials and resources developed for the implementation of these two courses should provide districts with a variety of sources to expand on the Framework.

The Social Studies Framework has the potential to bring the best instruction in social studies to students in NYS and to provide resources and guidance materials to districts who will create local curriculum. I look forward to partnering with the Department as it pursues the remaining steps that will lead to the adoption of the Framework by the Board of Regents.

Sincerely,



Catalina Fortino  
Vice President

CF/EJS/mc-96540